



Love in Post-1980s Oḍiā Poetry (Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik)

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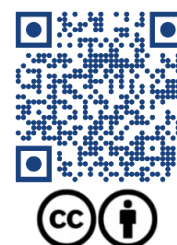
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Abstract— In the evolutionary trajectory of Oḍiā poetry, the post-1980 period is regarded as a significant turning point, which literary critics have designated as ‘post-modernism’. One of the most powerful poetic voices of this era belongs to the poet Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik. In his poetry, the consciousness of love is not merely an emotion but a vehicle of cultural resistance and the re-evaluation of life itself. This research paper endeavours to analyse the multifaceted manifestations of love across the poet’s various collections, including *Dhāna Saumtā Jhia*, *Dharmapatnī*, *Rebatī*, and the *Sāhitya Ekāḍemi* Award-winning *Sarijāthibā Aperā*. From the poet’s perspective, love embodies an indigenous bond with the soil of the village, a feminist sensibility, and, above all, an eternal quest for humanity. The very core of this study lies in how, through the deployment of postmodernist poetic techniques such as Magic Realism and Montage, he has forged an intimate connection between love, the earth, and humankind. In Mallik’s verses, love transcends mere romantic reverie; it becomes a ‘sublimated experience’ (Sublimation) that moves from melancholy toward optimism. This comprehensive examination thus grounds the lover-identity of Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik’s poetic persona in a firm philosophical foundation.



Keywords— Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik, Post-modernism, Love, Village Consciousness, Diversity of Love, Global Humanism, Magic Realism and Montage

INTRODUCTION

In the millennial tradition of Oḍiā literature, poetry has always absorbed and reflected the evolving consciousness and contours of society. From Sāraḷā Dās’s great epic rooted in the soil, through the spiritualism of the *Pañcasakhā* and the ornate eroticism of the *Rīti* period, Oḍiā poetry advanced steadily until it stood at the threshold of modernism (6). However, when the modern Oḍiā poetry of the 1960s and 1970s became imprisoned within intellectual complexity, individualistic despair, and obscure symbolism, the general reader began to drift away from it. It was precisely during this period—i.e., in the post-1980 era—that a new consciousness dawned in Oḍiā poetry, one that literary critics have identified as ‘post-modernism’ (1).

Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik is one of the foremost and most accomplished architects of this postmodern poetic movement (3). His poetry consciously rejects the artificiality and impenetrability of the preceding modernist phase and instead embraces a more democratic, tradition-

nurtured, and deeply soil-connected voice (6). The consciousness of love forms the central creative axis of his work. Yet this love is neither derived from foreign theories nor from imaginary romanticism. It springs directly from the pure, lived experience of Odisha’s rural soil—an experience that binds a human being to his or her roots (6). The spectrum of love in Mallik’s poetry is remarkably wide. It stretches from the rustic beauty celebrated in *Dhānaa Sāumṇṭā Jhia*, through the feminist sensibility of *Dharmapatnī*, to the universal humanism that illuminates the *Sarijāthibā Aperā* (4).

In the poet’s own idiom, love is an eternal value that stands as a cultural act of resistance against the forces of globalisation and market-driven economics (1). By foregrounding nativism, subaltern voices, and Dalit consciousness, Mallik articulates a fresh philosophy of love (6). Here love is not confined to the conventional hero-heroine relationship; it becomes a subtle, empathetic process that encompasses a mother’s lullaby, a

grandmother's lived past, the compassion owed to oppressed women, and the pain of society's most neglected souls (4). It is against this backdrop that an analysis of Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's poetic universe reveals the many-layered dimensions of his love consciousness.

Love Consciousness in Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's Poetry

In Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's poetry, the consciousness of love is as deep and vast as the ocean itself. From the very beginning of his poetic journey, love has appeared as an emotion profoundly rooted in the soil. His first collection, *Dhānaa Sāumñṭā Jhia* (1987), created a revolution on the landscape of Odia poetry (10). Here love is the living memory of rural Odisha and the very scent of the earth. Though the poet lives in an urban setting, he is never free from the rural landscape and memories that lie buried in his subconscious. In his verses, '*Dhānaa Sāumñṭā Jhia*' is not merely a character; she is a 'pseudo-character'—a veiled persona—through whom the poet gives expression to his own childhood, his deep attachment to his roots, and his passionate love for the native soil (5).

Dhānaa Sāumñṭā jhiaṭi, kiārī majhire / pāchiā thoi, bhūimre hātachuem.

se hāta chuiṁle/basumātā kuluri yāe, basumātā penthei paḍe.

se hāta chuiṁle / akaṭā Dhānaa kiārīre, kiciri miciri/

caḍheinṅa dundubhi bāje. / tā piṭhira kaṭā dāgaṭie pari, ākāśara/

thābara megharu pārijāta muruke. (Dhānaa Sāumñṭā jhia) (10)

*"The girl gathering grain in the heart of the field,
Sets her basket down and brushes the soil.*

At the touch of her hand,

Mother Earth shivers with delight;

Mother Earth swells with fruit.

At the touch of her hand, In the field of unharvested grain,

The chirping of birds rings out like a rhythmic drum.

Like the scar upon her back,

From the still clouds in the sky,

The Parijat flower breaks into a faint, knowing smile. " (Dhānaa Sāumñṭā jhia)

(a) Village Consciousness and Indigenous Love:

One of the defining features of postmodern poetry is 'Nativism'. Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik stands as its finest exponent. In his poetry, love reveals itself as a deep attraction to the mango groves of his village, the cloudy skies overhead, and the *Simuḷi* flowers that blaze in the scorching summer sun. He insists that love is not an intellectual indulgence but the warm lap of his aunt and the living inspiration drawn directly from his own native surroundings (4). Even in his collection *Ujuḍā Kṣetara Gīta* (1991), where love assumes a melancholic hue, it only serves to bind the earth and the landless man more intimately and profoundly (3).

mā' lo! / to kṣetare Dhānaa pācithiba ei ghaḍire

ghaṇḍā ghāguḍi bajei kou gahīra jamiru/ kajaḷā kasarā pheruthibe.

chīṭāñiā rātire tu' dutukuthibu/sītare tharuthiba to' haḷadī pāṭaśāḍhi

to' haḷadī gaṇṭhi diha.

mote e ākāśa baḍa ghinā lāguchi mā' / luha naaṇṭa heuchi jhuribāku

mote e suḍaṅgaru oṭāri ne' mā' / ne' to' suṣīṭaḷa kṣetara katiki

guṇḍuci mūṣā o bāicaḍheira gītare/mum darahei nebi bhāṅgi yāithibā

mo' dadarā chātiki. (kṣeta) (7)

"O Mother!

In your fields, the paddy must be ripening at this very hour;

And with the chime of bells and trinkets,

The dark-hued cattle must be returning from the deep meadows.

In the drizzling night, you must be huddled in your porch,

Your turmeric-yellow silk saree shivering in the cold—

Your body, the color of a turmeric root, trembling too.

Mother, this sky feels loathsome to me now,

And my tears are not enough to wash away this longing.

Drag me out of this tunnel, Mother!

Take me back to the side of your cool, quiet fields.

Amidst the songs of squirrels and weaver birds,

I shall mend this shattered, hollow chest of mine" (kṣeta).

Or

*bouta baḍhei die, tama pasarāku/pahili amaḷa
buitā cāuḷa muṭhe, tame ubhā thāa*

*pabanare uḍuthāe tama bāḷa kati-āmva gachara
baūḷa/gām gohiri kaḍaru dosamāḷi yāem
lamvithibā*

*kṣetaṭie tame, bhāri tophā bhāri parimaḷa.
(lambici lambici ḍora)*

*"Mother heaps your basket high,
with a fistful of rice from the first harvest.*

And there you stand—

*your hair dancing in the breeze, like the scent of
mango blossoms.*

*From the edge of the village path to the distant
horizon,*

*you are a sprawling field—so bright, so fragrant,
so pure." (lambici lambici ḍora) (7)*

In the poet's vision, this rural embodiment of love is not confined to beauty alone; it also carries within it stark images of exploitation and suffering. Throughout his poetry, he has powerfully constructed the pitiable, compassion-evoking countenance of women in both rural and urban landscapes (11). In poems such as 'Pāmelā', love unfolds as the narrative of a restless fate. The way a woman's love and aspirations remain helplessly entangled in the thorny hedge of society is sharply mirrored in the poet's ironic poetic language:

"bāḷa sārā khāli kaṇṭā

hāta sārā khāli churī

kete kāṭiba kāṭa, muṁ śiāḷi laṭā

gaḷi gaḷire laṭeici, mo nāsimaya pratyāśā.

danasārā khāli kharā

ākhisārā, khāli śoṣa . . . (pāmelā-2) (7)

"The path ahead is strewn with thorns,

And hands everywhere are clenching knives.

*Cut me as much as you will—for I am the Siali
vine;*

*I have trailed my vein-like longings through every
dark alley.*

The entire day is nothing but scorching sun,

*And my eyes are filled with nothing but thirst."
(pāmelā- 2)*

In Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's poetry, women's consciousness occupies a central position. He does not portray woman merely as an object of consumption or a conventional romantic heroine. Instead, in his verses, woman stands as the living symbol of endurance, strength, and, above all, humanity (11). In the poetry collection *Dharmapatnī* (2000), he imparts a strikingly new dimension to the relationship between marriage and love (3). Here, a woman is not merely a homemaker; she is the true companion in life's journey, and it is through her struggles and sacrifices that love remains vibrantly alive (16).

mo dehaku jimā dei/svāmīnka nidare

goḍaru pāumja kholi/muṁ yāe tumari āḍe...

patnīku jagei dei/ tame tama deha

*pahañca seṭhāre, aśinara jahna rāti/āmaku
takeithāe*

*yeuṁ gām, yeuṁ nai, yeuṁ dvaparare... (sumitrāra
ciṭhi) (5)*

"Leaving my body behind,

consigned to the depths of my husband's sleep,

I unfasten the anklets from my feet

and steal away toward you...

Entrusting your own wife to a watchful silence,

you bring your soul to that place—

where the moonlit night of aśina

awaits us with bated breath,

in that same village, by that same river,

*in that same eternal Age of dvapara." (sumitrāra
ciṭhi)*

The poet has portrayed, with exquisite precision, the inner psychology of a woman—her problems, dilemmas, and crises—through the medium of his verse. In the collection *Rebatī* (2016), he reinterprets Fakir Mohan's immortal character in an entirely fresh perspective. Here love emerges as an ardent aspiration for education, freedom, and the quest for one's own identity. The poet's feminist vision is not merely slogan-driven; it is suffused with a profound inner empathy (5).

mili apā beḷebeḷe bhala

āu beḷebeḷe kemiti goṭe anānti

yemiti kie śoṣinebe goṭipaṇe.

gocha niśabālā liṭu āṛṭiṣṭaku

adhabeḷe kahanti; kaṇa baṇare achu?

rātika ta, cāla śoi paḍibu mo khaṭare. (Miliapā) (5)

(b) Feminist Perspective and the Diversity of Love:

"Mili Apa is kind enough sometimes,
But at other times, she has this look in her eyes—
As if she might swallow you whole.
To Litu, the artist with the thick, bushy moustache,
She says halfway through the day, 'What, are you
living in a forest?'
'It's just for one night—come, you can sleep in my
bed.'" (Miliapā)

Character / Poem	Poetic Reflection
<i>Dhāna Sāumñā Jhia</i>	Soil-connected, innocent and full of struggle (5)
<i>Pāmelā</i>	Victim of society's sarcasm and betrayal, yet optimistic (11)
<i>Dharmapatnī</i>	Foundation of family values and love (5)
<i>Rebatī</i>	Eager for education and liberation; voice of the modern woman (5)

(c) Global Humanism and the Expansion of Love:

Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's consciousness of love is not limited to the rural soil of Odisha alone. His poetry is equally sensitive to the chain of events and human crises unfolding in various corners of the world. In the collections *Jeje Dekhi Nathibā Bhārata* (2015) and *Sarijāthibā Aperā* (2019), love attains a truly universal dimension (4). In the poem 'The Lone Girl', he portrays the anguish of a Syrian refugee girl, in whose war-torn world childhood and parental love have vanished amid violence and destruction (12). Here love becomes a bridge of universal kinship that shatters the walls of borders and language (12).

Heard stories from her mother
that set her eyes rolling in wonder;
that country, her homeland is now in ruins
a vast, barren expanse,
littered with severed limbs.
Its air is sick with the smell of
tonnes and tonnes of explosives
there lay piles of disfigured childhood
in pathetic abandon
to tell the tale of a country that was! (The Lone Girl) (12)

His poem 'Eyes' offers a delicate and profound expression of love. Within a pair of eyes, the poet discovers an entire cosmos. The beloved's eyes are not merely a source of beauty; they hold within them 'the moon of the full-moon night', 'the dense intimacy of a village evening', and 'rain-washed sunlight' (12). Through these images he elevates love into a natural and timeless experience.

Your eyes could transform a wasteland.
to a paddy field in luxuriant green,
at times they are moist with muffled sobs,
or, like a spear smeared in blood, at others!
What is more beautiful --
the bright loquacity in your eyes
or the rain-washed sunshine,
the mysterious mutter in your eyes
or a village enveloped in a wispy darkness?
(EYE) (12)

When examined through a philosophical lens, the love consciousness in Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's poetry is seen to touch every aspect of postmodernism. In his work, love is not merely a psychological state but a profound social and cultural commitment. Whereas in pre-1980 modern Oḍiā poetry love was frequently confined to failure, betrayal and physical desire, Mallik has raised it to the elevated plane of a 'sublimated experience' (5).

jahnaku kahili: tu' um nā' / mum nīḷa kaīm pālaṭi
yibi
piḍhā chuumthibā jahni ḍaṅkaku kaṇṭa deli/
'cāridinake mum pheri āsibi'
caḍheimāne goḍei goḍei āsile khaṇḍebāṭa
kahili: yāa, phurusata hele/tama pāim pācilā
phaḷara ḍāḷa hebi.
(galā bāri: gām chāḍilā beḷe) (5)

"I whispered to the moon: 'Just say yes,
and I shall turn into a blue water lily.'
I gave my word to the ribbed-gourd vine reaching
for the porch:
'I will be back in just four days.'
The birds chased me for a stretch of the road;
I told them, 'Go back now—when I am free,
I will return to be a branch of ripe fruit just for
you.'" (galā bāri: gām chāḍilā beḷe)

(d) Modernism versus Post-modernism: The Definition of Love

In the poetry of the giants of modern Odia literature, such as Ramakanta Rath and Sitakanta Mahapatra, love was frequently imprisoned within the frameworks of 'Existentialism' and 'Nihilism' (2). In Ramākānta's *Śrīrādhā*, love is transformed into a complex metaphysical quest for death and the posthumous realm (14). Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik, however, has liberated love from this intellectual entanglement and restored it once more to the intimate proximity of 'the soil' and 'humanity' (4).

*hātare mora pijā pleṭ.../ kāhimki tebe mane
paḍuchi kañiā mupaḍhi
māṭi ḍhamāra.../ naatālāre, mun/ṭhiā hoichi
abi/hātare pejār... (Bāsnā) (20)*

*"A plate of pizza in my hand...
Then why does the memory of parched rice haunt
me?
The smell of a sun-baked earthen floor...
Here I stand, on the ninth floor—
A pager in my hand, yet longing for the taste of
rice water." (Bāsnā)*

He has embraced love as a simple and natural experience that occurs in the life of every ordinary human being. This transformed contour of love in his poetry may be analysed as follows:

- **From Melancholy to Affirmation:** Rather than narrating tales of despair, his poetry presents a vivid portrait of life's optimism and boundless possibilities (5).

*āga māsa bhaḷi/dekhei dabāku paḍantā nāhim
puaku
nukhurā toḍa/biddu kāhāmka, nām gandha
nāhim pāṭhapaḍhāra
khāli paīsā, khāli paīsā...
sākulei kahi huantā: 'mana ghenei/paḍh bābā:
kouṭhire yadi kocimnabu ne'
dekhāyiba ṭānkā kathā! (Betanabhogīra swapna)
(20)*

"I wish I didn't have to show my son,
the same dry, empty face I wore last month.
'You useless boy! '—I shout, though he's but a
child,
'Not a trace of learn in you, only money, money,
and more money!'
I wish instead I could say, with a gentle hand on
his head:

'Learn with your heart, my son;
And if you need a tutor, go ahead and take the
coaching—
Don't you worry, about the money, we will see."
(Betanabhogīra swapna)

- **Social Commitment:** Here love is not merely personal; rather, it embodies a sincere empathy and deep compassion toward society's subaltern classes and the oppressed (5).

*samaste puchanti khāli sei eka kathā: "keum
kuḷare lāḷita
tama sparddhā, tama abhimāna, tama
uttarottara...?
kintu hāya! kāhā hātare kithāe
nijara janma, nijara jāti, nija kuḷa-gotra?"
(Basuṣeṇa-9) (5)
"Everyone asks me the same solitary question:
'In which lineage was it nurtured—
this audacity of yours, this pride, this soaring
rise?'
But alas! Whose hand holds the power
to choose their own birth, their caste, their clan, or
their creed?" (Basuṣeṇa-9)*

- **Tradition and Heritage:** To express love, he has employed characters from ancient mythology, the Ramayana, and the *Mahābhārata* in strikingly fresh and contemporary forms (5).

*bāsudeba drupadaṅku
drupada dhruṣṭadyūmnāṅku
dhruṣṭadyūmna cāhimle ethara pāñcāḷiṅku...
ghoṣṭhibā o mane nathibā
saṃlāpa śubhilā etiki beḷe
kuṇṭhita-baramālyaru.
"tathākathika he sūtaputra!*

*tama dhanu nibāra
kuḷāśīḷatāra e svaḃammarare karṇa,
chiḥ, ki abāntara !!" (Basuṣeṇa-17) (5)*

"Vasudeva looked to Drupada,
Drupada looked to dhruṣṭadyūmna,
And Dhruṣṭadyūmna fixed his gaze upon
Panchali...
In that silence, a rehearsed yet forgotten dialogue
Echoed from the hesitant garland:

'O so-called Son of a Charioteer! Put down your bow;

In this assembly of noble blood and high lineage,
O Karna—

Fie! How utterly absurd!" (Basuṣeṇa-17)

(E) Magic Realism and Montage: Poetic Application

In the expressive mode of Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's love consciousness, one finds the remarkably successful deployment of postmodern poetic techniques such as 'Magic Realism' and 'Montage' (3). He discovers the supernatural within the ordinary and the real within the supernatural. His collection *Sarijāthibā Aperā* stands as a supreme example of this approach (4). The poems in it articulate the complex truths of life in a richly musical style. By assembling disparate, fragmented scenes of existence, the poet creates a collective, panoramic image of love—a technique precisely known as 'Montage' (3).

ṣāṭhie barṣataḷe/ tame mote śikheithila sāre gāmā

ṣāṭhie barṣapare/ kaṇa kholi dabāku nāca bāra?

ṣāṭhie barṣataḷe/hātare mo ṭeki deithila adhiḱāra

ṣāṭhie barṣapare/goṭie deḍhikūare

kaṇa karidebāku chārakhāra? (Ghuṅgura bāndhi sārichi) (19)

"Sixty years ago,

You were the one who taught me the notes: Sa-Re-Ga-Ma.

Sixty years later,

Is it to open a dance bar that we have come?

Sixty years ago,

You placed 'rights' and 'justice' into my hands.

Sixty years later,

Is it all to be scorched and laid to waste?

Into the depths of a single, stagnant well? "
(Ghuṅgura bāndhi sārichi)

Or

muṁ dhūsara śūnyabāṇī/tame, śyāmaḷa sambhābanā

tame yuddha, / muṁ, yuddhara mantranā.....

Xxxxxx

tume yeuṁ gīta lekhicha/khaḍī ghare, muṁ svara deichi

tāku jana pathare/ tume kahicha 'bande'

muṁ kahichi 'mātārām' / tame kahicha 'bhārata mātā ki'

muṁ kahichi 'jaya'... (Ghuṅgura bāndhi sārichi) (19)

"I am the grey, ethereal voice;

You are the green, lush possibility.

You are the War,

And I am the strategy behind the battle...

The song you wrote within the prison walls,

I gave it wings of melody upon the public roads.

You cried out, 'Vande,'

And I responded, 'Mātārām.'

You shouted, 'Bhārat Mātā Ki,'

And I roared, 'Jaya!'" (Ghuṅgura bāndhi sārichi)

His poem 'Sarijāthibā Aperā' presents a harrowing portrayal of love intertwined with profound social injustice. Here, love manifests as the poet's deep, compassionate empathy toward the victimised woman. Through it, he sharply satirises society's passivity, religious superstition, and moral decay (20).

kau jhia mana nadie jahna āḍe/bayasa hela

kaṇei nacāhem yeku tāku/ākhi phīṭile?

muṁ ta kiśorī setebeḷe

kemiti bujhithānti/yuddhare pā 'dele bāpāe

āu bāpā nahei/huanti bādaśā'

yuddhare pā 'thāpile prema/āu prema nahoi hue jugupsā? (Nāi paṭhāre sūryyāsta-2) (20)

"What girl does not lose her heart to the moon,

once youth has dawned upon her?

Who does not steal a glance at this one or that,

once her eyes have truly opened?

I was but a young girl then...

How could I have known?

That's when fathers step into the theatre of war,

they cease to be fathers

and become Emperors instead.

And when love sets foot upon a battlefield,

it is love no longer—it becomes an object of loathing."

(*Naī paṭhāre sūryyāsta-2*)

The poet's poetic persona presents himself as a 'word-artist' (*Śabda-śilpī*), summoning the victimised woman back to life once more and issuing a clarion call to fight for justice (20). This constitutes a revolutionary form of love.

prema ka 'na, yuddha ka 'na
deśa ka 'na, pātra ka 'na
jībana ka 'na, mṛtyu ka 'na
āu e beḷe pacāre kie? (Naī paṭhāre sūryyāsta- 2)
 (20)

What is love, what is war?

What is nation, what is the chalice?

What is life, what is death?

And who, in this moment, even asks? (Naī paṭhāre sūryyāsta-2)

The Nature of Love:

Poetic Aspect	Modern Odia Poetry (1960–80)	Post-Modern Poetry (Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik)
Nature of Love	Intellectual, complex, and existentialist (1)	Soil-rooted, simple, and deeply empathetic (4)
Language and Style	Western-influenced, obscure symbolism (1)	Indigenous, folk-song based, rich in suggestion (6)
Portrayal of Women	Mythical figures or enigmatic beings (14)	Real women from society's subaltern and marginalized strata (11)
Perspective	Despair and sense of alienation (1)	Optimism and collective consciousness (5)

The Relevance of Love in Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's Poetry

Critics have consistently linked the relevance of love in Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's poetry to his profound commitment to 'Nativism' (*Deśajātā*) (6). In his work, love is never directed solely toward another human being; rather, it becomes a sacred offering—to one's native environment, to one's inherited cultural legacy, and above all, to the essence of humanity itself. As a true 'trendsetter' among poets, Mallik has liberated Odia poetry from the prison-house of obscurity and intellectual elitism, restoring it once more to the embrace of the general reader and making it genuinely

reader-friendly (4). In the poetic universe of Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik, the multifaceted dimensions of love reveal themselves as follows:

- **Maternal Love and Childhood Memory:** The lullabies and stories of his aunt (Mausi) serve as a primary source of inspiration in his poetry (4).
- **Patriotism / Love for the Homeland:** In *Jeje Dekhinathibā Bhārata* ('The India My Grandmother Never Saw'), there is a profound, heartfelt attachment to the heritage and soul of India (3).
- **Universal Love:** Amid a world ravaged by war and violence, his verses carry a powerful message of love and peace (12).
- **Reverence for Womanhood:** In poems such as '*Pāmelā*' and '*Rebatī*', he celebrates and pays homage to the hidden strength and inner resilience of women (11).

This vast and expansive canvas of love in Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's poetry has firmly established him as one of the most celebrated and gifted creators in contemporary Odia literature (3). Each of his poems is a living, breathing experience that touches the reader's heart and cultivates a positive, life-affirming perspective (4).

CONCLUSION

In Mallik's poetry, love emerges as an eternal and sublime realisation. It is far more than a mere emotion; it constitutes a fundamental human condition. Through his creative oeuvre, the poet has brought love back into intimate proximity with the soil and presented it as a potent form of cultural resistance. His consciousness of love extends from the fragrant earth of rural Odisha to a profound, worldwide empathy for humanity. Amid the complexities of postmodernism, he has firmly established love as a 'sublimated experience' (Sublimation)—one that liberates the reader from melancholy and illuminates the path toward optimism. The poet's feminist perspective, his deep-rooted nativism, and his amplification of subaltern voices have endowed his love consciousness with an entirely new horizon. He has enriched Odia poetry with fresh vocabulary, vivid new imagery, and an unmistakably humane voice. In Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's poetry, love is at once the innocent smile of that '*Dhānaa Sāumñā Jhia*' and the final, lingering melody of the '*Sarijāthibā Aperā*'—a resonance that continues to echo forever in the reader's heart. Amid all the upheavals and agonies of life, love alone remains the supreme force—the one power that shows humankind the way to live truly as human beings.

This is the very core and essence of Hṛṣīkeśa Mallik's poetic philosophy.

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